DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 074 332 AC 014 275

TITLE	Life-Long Education in the Light of Certain Experiments--From Conception to Realization.
INSTITUTION	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, Paris (France).
REPORT NO	ED-72-CONF-1-2-A
PUB DATE	22 Sep 72
NOTE	8p.; Paper presented at the Interdisciplinary Symposium on Life-Long Education (Paris, France, September 25 - October 2, 1972)
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.65 HC-$3.29
DESCRIPTORS	*Adult Education; Adult Education Programs; Conference Reports; *Continuous Learning; Developing Nations; *Educational Change; Educational Needs; Interdisciplinary Approach; National Programs; Social Change; Symposia
IDENTIFIERS	UNESCO

ABSTRACT

This paper is intended as a proposed framework for discussion at UNESCO's Interdisciplinary Symposium on Life-long Education. It synthesizes the papers submitted by re-grouping the questions posed, the problems identified, and the steps taken or considered in order to determine the scope, the nature and the modalities of the process leading to lifelong education. Lifelong education appears to be not only an educational concept but also the terminal point of the educational level of evolutionary process, the object and the result of which has been to bring education closer to new requirements and conditions of an educational, economic, social, political and cultural nature. The points of view expressed by the participants add up to provide a definition of the origins, objectives, scope and content of lifelong education. They also make a contribution, essential for the purpose of the symposium, toward making an inventory of the different types of approaches and of steps necessary to insure a transition from existing educational systems to lifelong education. (For related document, see AC 014 274.) (Author/KM)

ED 074332

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Limited Distribution

ED-72/CONF.1/2/A
PARIS, 22 September 1972
Original: French

UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL,
SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

INTERDISCIPLINARY SYMPOSIUM ON LIFE-LONG EDUCATION
(Paris, 25 September - 2 October 1972)

LIFE-LONG EDUCATION IN THE LIGHT OF CERTAIN EXPERIMENTS

- FROM CONCEPTION TO REALIZATION

The purpose of the symposium is to throw some light, starting from various experiments, on certain problems raised by the passage from existing systems of education to life-long education.

The documents prepared by the participants, on the basis of their own experience, reflect the complex diversity of approaches and situations. In this connexion they provide valuable information which, of course, will be supplemented by oral contributions in the course of the discussion. They reveal a wide range of questions, problems and undertakings which either converge or exist in juxtaposition.

The present document is aimed at re-grouping the questions posed, the problems identified, and the steps taken or considered in order to determine the scope, the nature and the modalities of the process which leads to life-long education. It does not by any means exhaust the wealth of contributions made, but is only intended as a framework proposed for the discussion.

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I - OBJECTIVES AND DIMENSIONS OF LIFE-LONG EDUCATION

Life-long education appears to be not only an educational concept but also the terminal point of the educational level of evolutionary process, the object and the result of which has been to bring education closer to new requirements and conditions of an educational, and also of an economic, social, political and cultural nature.

Life-long education should be viewed within the framework of an overall reform of educational systems which correspond to requirements of new socio-economic, political and cultural objectives. Mr. SKANDER and Mr. MBUNDA show how the setting-up of a new educational system followed access to national independence. In this connexion, Mr. SKANDER emphasizes the effects of the "de-structurization" of the former colonial system of education and the implications of basic choices made by the Algerian community for existing structures: "the choice in favour of democratization resulted in an explosion of school enrollment, the choice in favour of Arabization upset the pedagogical structure and the choice in favour of science and technology made the greater part of contents and methods obsolete". Education is a means of de-colonizing or freeing a country from the constraints it had to bear (Mr. PANDO), both from a quantitative and qualitative point of view. First, it is a matter of extending education by a series of complementary steps to all groups of the population which had been deprived of it, as exemplified by Mr. MBUNDA and Mr. PANDO and, as stated by Mr. TAPANES, of "organizing the masses". Certain participants (Mr. TAPANES, Mr. PANDO and Mr. MBUNDA) stated that in this situation education is linked to an ideology.

One should point out, however, that the elitist and selective nature of education has not been restricted to colonized countries. Mr. WEDELL and Mr. SUCHODOLSKI gave a reminder to this effect when stating that the educational systems of their respective countries have, for a long time, favoured a minority, whereas for the greater number educational provisions were of a marginal and haphazard nature.

The existence of education in order to take advantage of all human resources of a nation and particularly of adults in the framework of life-long education appears to be linked to the requirements of development. Mr. PANDO shows that in Peru the economic factor played a decisive role in this direction. Life-long education appears to be the means of an educational policy that aims, specifically, to train the population for productivity for social and economic development: it cannot be separated from the land reform and from the participation of workers in production management.

In this respect, most documents place special emphasis on the relation between the educational process and the world of work:

for Mr. TAPANES it is necessary to "harmonize mass education with production"; for Mr. SKANDER the trained cadres requirements can only be met by an educational system mostly focussed on the planned goals of development; Mr. VATIER pays special attention to French legislation in the field of vocational training which has been developed within an institutional framework, recognizes the right to training leaves with salaries for trainees and employers' participation in the financing of training. In the context of the first experiments conducted in France, seminars for teaching staff in plants and production units, steps aimed at facilitating the integration in France of foreign workers, the adjustment to various occupations of young people, the integration of women in active life and the training of staff for adult education shed light on "the conditions in which the educational machinery can be adapted in a given sector to its new system of training adults" (Mr. VATIER).

This functional nature of education is also underscored by Mr. MBUNDA: "political education cannot be separated from education in economics. Political philosophy must go on a par with economic planning". Vocational training thus becomes a right as much as an obligation: "farmers have a right to be acquainted with modern agricultural technology as they carry main responsibility for our external trade". Idealism and the myth of production are equally rejected: "if they are acquainted with a more modern type of agriculture they will raise their standard of living; they will make rural work more attractive and they will help breach the gap between rural and urban development."

In the report on the Peruvian experiment, Mr. PANDO also stresses the functional nature of the educational undertaking now taking place. The "systema de qualificación profesional extraordinaria" is viewed in the educational reform as an organic system of life-long education related to vocational life and to manpower requirements. It is intended to remedy the shortcomings of the traditional system in which only 13% of the graduates have a chance to work in industry. It makes it possible to ensure the vocational upgrading of workers and their re-training in relation to scientific and technological progress.

Life-long education also appears to be related to an attempt at social change which, as stated by Mr. TAPANES, begins with the fight against the causes of ignorance. Life-long education as an illustration of the democratic spirit and as a means of ensuring the continuing participation, appears in Mr. PANDO's document, as a liberating education. It generates an awakening of the masses (concientizacion) and a transformation in depth of mental attitudes. Mr. SKANDER stresses the importance of the emancipation of women and Mr. TAPANES the importance of women's participation in political, productive, technical and teaching activities as an aspect of life-

long education. Life-long education, Mr. SUCHODOLSKI remarks, provides an antidote against alienation by the consumer society. Thus resources which can promote cultural enrichment should, nevertheless, be utilized. Life-long education can be contrasted to the notion of culture considered as a kind of goods and gives to the human-being the feeling of being a responsible person and a creator, whose individual richness is achieved through the richness of his life. It extolls the creative power of man and, Mr. MBUNDA remarks, re-establishes traditional cultural values.

Education conceived along these lines which, according to Mr. WEDELL and Mr. SUCHODOLSKI, achieve the synthesis of humanism and productivism, of occupational promotion and education for leisure, therefore appears as a global process or, as Mr. SKANDER says " as a process of total development of the individual". It thus achieves the synthesis of the various educational experiences of the individual at school as well as out of school, at various stages and in various situations during his life. Mr. PANDO lists a number of these educational experiences and Mr. SKANDER identifies various educational factors which are at play. The dialectic relation between school education and out-of-school education is thus at the very centre of the concept of life-long education.

Mr. SKANDER sees the relation between school and out-of-school education as a positive one. He regards out-of-school education as an effective counterpart of the educational system as a whole which has been "recognized to be unable to take responsibility for making its own revolution". Mr. SKANDER believes that the choice in favour of out-of-school education is based on political, economical and educational considerations: (a) a factor of renewal of the political regenerating of national conscience; (b) integration of the individual in the nation's productive sector; (c) utilization of environment through the resources of new technology including sociological and technological resources.

Most documents emphasize both the contribution of adult education to life-long education. They help dispose of the whole misunderstanding by which only too frequently life-long education is considered as a new form or a mere continuation of traditional adult education.

Life-long education appears to be as well as an enrichment and an extension of traditional education, as an economic requirement, a political commitment and a starting point for reflection on the theory and practice of education.

Mr. WEDELL refers to the role played by adult education in its initial phase and shows that, because it reflects a dualist philosophy of education, great difficulties may be encountered when the time comes to integrate it within the framework of life-long education. It shows

that pedagogical innovation in the United Kingdom was developed to a large extent outside adult education in recent years. It took place chiefly through the Industrial Training Act (1964), the Open University and changes resulting from community development. Mr. WEDELL therefore suggests that the traditional framework of adult education should be extended beyond the traditional boundaries of adult education in order to identify all formal and non-formal learning situations of adults.

In the same spirit, Mr. TAPANES suggests that the educational process should be centred on the adult taken as a receiver of knowledge whatever the situation may be. The problem of effective learning is bound to play an even greater part in the theory and practice of adult education. One should identify the kind of resistance which prevents adult education from moving away from tradition.

Is not the lack of motivation for adult education lack of motivation for a certain type of adult education?*

Several participants have no doubt that the role of adult education in education cannot but be extended. Mr. MBUNDA is of the opinion that the twenty-first century will be the century of adult education insofar as the different aspects of countries' development will be related to the degree of efficiency of various types of adult education.**

Mr. MORO-OKA refers to the five categories of adult education listed in the Exeter paper and suggests another breakdown.

Mrs. UDJUS's report, which is based on the Norwegian experiment in the field of adult education may provide a good starting point to analyse a complex situation which is exemplified by the joint participation of the State, non-governmental organizations and by employers and trade unions in adult education. The NVI (Norwegain Institute of Adult Education) is a good illustration of adult education through programmes and research, experiments, documentation, information and guidance, while the activities of non-governmental organizations are fully respected.

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* mentioned by Mr. Paul LENGRAND

** Mr. Paul LENGRAND, however, notes that often adult education is only marginal in comparison with the role of political parties, churches, trade unions, or professional groups or interests.

II - APPROACHES AND MODALITIES FOR ENSURING A TRANSITION FROM EXISTING SYSTEMS TO LIFE-LONG EDUCATION

The points of view expressed by the participants add up to provide a definition of the origins, of the objectives, of the scope and of the content of life-long education. They also make a contribution, which appears essential in view of the purpose of the symposium, towards making an inventory of the different types of approaches and of steps necessary to ensure a transition from existing educational systems to life-long education.

1. First, Mr. MORO-OKA stresses the need for analysing and identifying factors favourable to life-long education. In Japan he feels that such factors are the extension of the formal school system, cultural homogeneity widespread interest for life-long education and the development of social education. The Japanese Government support consists of research on the educational system, experimental projects and the exchange of information.

2. The promotion of life-long education, of course, has also legislative, institutional and legal aspects which Mr. VATIER has undertaken to review. They are related to the right to life-long education, to the modalities of public and private financing, to various incentives and to the respective roles of the State and various educational institutions.

3. The problem of the respective responsibilities of various bodies and institutions in the field of life-long education has been raised by several participants and certain solutions have been proposed. Mr. MORO-OKA, discussing the problem of distribution of responsibility, makes distinction between conceptual and managerial responsibilities, and also between responsibilities at various administrative levels. Mr. PANDO addresses himself to the problem of educational responsibilities to be assumed by various ministries as the monopoly of the Education Ministry will come to an end, although it will retain responsibility for providing the basic educational structure. The participation of the individual and of the community in the planning and management of education are also discussed. It seems that for many participants (Mr. MORO-OKA, Mr. MBUNDA, Mr. SKANDER, Mr. PANDO) decentralization goes hand-in-hand with life-long education insofar as education is then adapted to various situations and the requirements of different groups.

4. Several participants, in particular Mr. TAPANES, Mr. SUCHODOLSKI and Mr. PANDO, describe the range of educational institutions and measures required for the purpose of life-long education. Mr. MORO-OKA reviews the various types of educational agents in relation to the kind of competence to be developed, and Mr. PANDO refers to the original solutions advocated in the Peruvian reform. For instance, the "communal educational nuclei" which gave fresh impetus to out-of-school education and the SENATI scheme for industrial training.

5. Modalities of integration of school and out-of-school education already mentioned have been analysed by several participants.

Mr. SUCHODOLSKI reviews the factors at play in the integration process: the family, pre-school education; primary education, secondary education, higher education, in-service training and re-training and adult education. At the same time he stresses the need for a harmonious relationship between school institutions on the one hand and professional, artistic and cultural circles on the other.

Mrs. UDJUS points out that the reform of the educational system in Norway is focussed on the integration of school and out-of-school education and has been made possible by the considerable expansion of adult education. An implication of integrating the different types of school and out-of-school education is the need to break down the partitions between various types of education, as indicated by Mr. SKANDER.

6. Life-long education, a synthesis of various types of education, requires the mobilization of all educational resources, a point made by Mr. SKANDER and Mr. PANDO. It calls upon all those who have received some instruction: "That those who know more teach those who know less", Mr. TAPANES says. For Mr. PANDO "life-long education will be realized only insofar as one accepts the notion that all Peruvians are always both teachers and learners". The resources of the school system must be supplemented by various educational undertakings and experiments conducted by youth, workers, and women and which result in a very rich associatative relationship. This approach is linked to the "concientización" of the population which is encouraged by the State. Mr. PANDO also stresses the role of production units in the field of vocational training and apprenticeship.

7. The training of educators is, of course, an essential requirement if life-long education is to be realized. Insofar as life-long education is geared to new ends and aims and requires new educational measures and structures, it also requires, as pointed out by Mr. TAPANES and Mr. SKANDER, new types of educators.

8. The content of education, for similar reasons, is no more free from the need for changes in depth. This is the result of a series of factors: the new objectives of life-long education; the fact that it brings together the values of humanism and culture on the one hand, and the requirements of development and of technological progress, on the other; the preference given to the development of individual skills over the transmission of knowledge. This is stressed by Mr. SKANDER, Mr. SUCHODOLSKI and Mr. TAPANES.

9. The utilization of the resources of modern technology and of mass communication media is advocated by Mr. WEDELL and Mr. SKANDER.

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Those are some of the problems of "passage" encountered by the participants and which have to be solved in the process which leads from traditional systems to life-long education. Certain solutions have been mentioned, others remain to be found. Of course there are other problems which have not yet been identified, even less solved. To take only one example, what are the implications of systems in which school and out-of-school, institutionalized and formal types of education will be integrated on traditional structures of school and higher education? More generally, there are a number of issues of an educational and of a pedagogical nature, all related to the concept of life-long education, which the symposium might fruitfully dwell upon, discuss in depth and clarify.

There are many other problems which may be revealed and discussed during the symposium. Their analysis will lead to the discussion of the following item of the agenda which will be concerned with providing the elements for a strategic approach to life-long education which will combine various steps to be taken in a short, medium and long term.

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APR 18 1973
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